

strategy based on more community policing, tougher penalties, and better prevention. Today our strategy is showing remarkable results. We're ahead of schedule and under budget in meeting our goal of putting 100,000 police on the street. And all across America, crime rates have fallen to a 25-year low, respect for the law is on the rise, families are beginning to feel safe in their communities again.

Keeping guns out of the hands of criminals has been at the center of our strategy and an essential part of our success. Since I signed the Brady law, after a big debate in Congress which was led in the House of Representatives by now Senator-elect Charles Schumer of New York, background checks have put a stop to nearly a quarter of a million handgun purchases by fugitives or felons. Law enforcement officers from around the country have told us that fewer guns on the street have made a huge difference in the lives of families they serve.

At the end of this month, we will make the Brady law even stronger. For the first time ever, we will require background checks for the purchase of any firearm, whether purchased from a licensed gun dealer or a pawnshop. But under this new "instacheck" system, as it's called, we'll be able to run nearly twice as many background checks, and most of them in just a matter of minutes.

We've spent 5 years working with State and local law enforcement to put this system in place, but when it comes to our families' safety, we must take another important step. Every year, an untold number of firearms are bought and sold at an estimated 5,000 gun shows around our country. I come from a State where these shows are very popular. I have visited and enjoyed them over the years. They're often the first place parents teach their children how to handle firearms safely. I know most gun dealers and owners are dedicated to promoting safe and legal gun use.

But at too many gun shows, a different, dangerous trend is emerging. Because the law permits some firearms to be sold without background checks, some of these gun shows have become illegal arms bazaars for criminals and gun traffickers looking to buy and

sell guns on a cash-and-carry, no-questions-asked basis.

On Tuesday the people of Florida voted overwhelmingly to put a stop to these tainted transactions and make it harder for criminals to buy firearms. Under the new Florida law, communities now can take action to require background checks for the public sale of all guns. I believe this should be the law of the land: No background check, no gun, no exceptions.

Therefore, I am directing Secretary Rubin and Attorney General Reno to report back to me in 60 days with a plan to close the loophole in the law and prohibit any gun sale without a background check. We didn't fight as hard as we did to pass the Brady law only to let a handful of unscrupulous gun dealers disrespect the law, undermine our progress, put the safety of our families at risk. With this action, we are one step closer to shutting them down.

I look forward to working together with members of both parties in the new Congress to meet this challenge and all our challenges to build a safer and stronger America for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 9:30 a.m. on November 6 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 7. This transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Electronic Mail Message to John Glenn

November 7, 1998

Dear John,

Thanks for your message. Hillary and I had a great time at the launch. We are very proud of you and the entire crew, and a little jealous. We can't wait for you to get home so we can have a first hand report. Meanwhile back on earth, we're having a lot of fun with your adventure. At a camp rally in Queens, I asked an 83 year old lady what she thought of your trip. She replied that it seemed like a perfectly fine thing for a young man like

you to do! I hope your last few hours go well. Give my best to the rest of the crew.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: The message was transmitted in the morning from the White House to John Glenn aboard the space shuttle *Discovery* orbiting the Earth. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the text of the message to the President from John Glenn as follows:

Dear Mr. President,

This is certainly a first for me, writing to a President from space, and it may be a first for you in receiving an E mail direct from and orbiting spacecraft.

In any event, I want to personally thank you and Mrs. Clinton for coming to the Cape to d/see the launch. I hope you enjoyed it just half as much as we did on board. It is truly an awesome experience from a personal standpoint, and of even greater importance for all of the great research projects we have on *Discovery*. The whole crew was impressed that you would be the first President to personally see a shuttle launch and asked me to include their best regards to you Hillary. She has discussed her interest in the space program with Annie on several occasions, and I know she would like to be on a flight just like this one.

We have gone almost a third of the way around the world in the time it has taken me to write this letter, and the rest of the crew is waiting. Again, our thanks and best regards. Will try to give you a personal briefing after we return next Saturday.

Sincerely,

John Glenn

Proclamation 7146—Veterans Day, 1998

November 9, 1998

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

This year on Veterans Day, we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the armistice that finally silenced the guns of World War I. Millions of brave Americans marched into

Europe and into the brutality of trench warfare to fight that war. Although President Woodrow Wilson recognized that "it is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war," he also realized that it was important to do so "for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments" The veterans of the First World War accepted this burden and privilege, which American men and women in uniform have borne throughout the decades and still bear today.

At Cantigny, St. Mihiel, Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, and the Meuse-Argonne, American soldiers withstood the onslaughts of the enemy and, with extraordinary valor and unbending determination, turned the tide of battle and won a signal victory for democracy. Our Nation has been truly blessed by the service of these veterans who set an extraordinary example of courage and devotion to country that inspired the generations of Americans who followed them into the Armed Forces.

Through two world wars, through long and costly struggles against aggression in Korea and Vietnam, through conflict in the Persian Gulf, and in numerous peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, America's veterans have risked their lives and spilled their blood to keep faith with our Nation's fundamental values of freedom, democracy, and human dignity. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to these patriots, whose service and sacrifice have allowed us to raise our children in a country blessed with peace and prosperity and to shape a brighter future for nations around the world.

In grateful recognition of the contributions of those who have served in our Armed Forces, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor America's veterans. On Veterans Day, we honor all those who have served in our Armed Forces, and we remember with deep respect those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. America's veterans have answered the highest calling of citizenship, and they continue to inspire us with the depth